1:Murphy and Quain E-4,5 (1938) 1955
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the group, and they never participated in any of its activities. Occasionally men gathered in the village center during the day, but at night the circle always formed, generally lasting from sundown until about nine o'clock. In the afternoon it was often the scene of wrestling matches. Talk usually went on then also, but the gatherings were smaller than at night.

At night most of the men were present, and conversation ranged over a variety of topics. Of greatest interest were neighboring tribes, past warfare and present threats to peace. Gossip, usually about sex, found ready ears. This was the time when the chief made most of his speeches, and the time when plans for a fishing trip, for salt manufacture, or for a journey to the Waurá for pots were discussed. The men's circle was also the place where the shaman practiced his art, and, as noted above, where grievances were aired.

The social life of the males was centered almost completely in these gatherings, and it was in them that the mechanisms of village authority and social control were expressed. Also, the men's circle underlined the cleavage between the activities of the men and of the women. The women had no formal grouping such as the men's circle, but they showed solidarity when the need arose. While men were dominant, as Quain said, they "look on the women as an ungoverned force," and open group quarrels were not infrequent between the sexes.

### *Status*

*Aek*, the Trumaí word for chief, also denoted membership in the upper half of what is nominally a status class. Members of the lower half of this class were loosely referred to as *camara*, a term which, according to Galvão, probably diffused into the region from rural Brazil, where workers are called *camaradas*.[19] There was some uncertainty on the part of Quain's informants as to who were members of the *aek* division. In general, it included the chief, the two sub-chiefs, and their families. But while the status appears to have been hereditary, its transmission was loose and uncertain. For instance, Maibu was an *aek*, but he refused to classify his brothers as such. However, the fathers of both Maibu and Katauka, one of the sub-chiefs, were *aek*. Matiwana's three daughters and his son derived their status from him, further supporting the case for patrilineality. On the other hand, the children of one of the daughters were *aek*, even though their father was a *camara*. The significance of being *aek* had probably declined with the weakening of leadership patterns and the lessened importance of the sub-chiefs. Today, the *aek-camara* division is non-functional, membership is confused, and, except for the chieftainship, it is correlated only vaguely

[19] Galvão 1949, p. 40.

1:Murphy and Quain E-4,5 (1938) 1955
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with prestige. Aloari, who later became chief, was classified as a *camara* at the time of Quain's visit.

At the top of the Trumaí prestige scale was the chief. His authority was limited, but he was more respected than any other man. The two sub-chiefs enjoyed some, but not much, prestige. Matiwana was an old man, and old age decreases status among the Trumaí. He took the lead in group curing ceremonies, however, and was the repository of much Trumaí lore and learning. Nor was Katauka, the other sub-chief, very influential. And neither official had the privilege of "talking" to the people as Maibu did. That Katauka was a shaman and Matiwana the chief curer of the village contributed more to their prestige than did their position as sub-chiefs or their membership in the *aek* class. Tun, the shaman, and Oirupa, the sorcerer, ranked just below the chief in importance. The former enjoyed some standing as his prognostications of enemy movements were relied upon and respected by everybody. Oirupa had added power only because he was feared.

The only other criteria of status were youth and aggressiveness. Property was not a point of prestige, but those whose assertive attitudes gave them some status and influence were also those who manifested an accumulative attitude toward property. Youth and sexual prowess were highly regarded. Boasting about sexual exploits was usually done privately, but great pride was taken in them. This was related to the general esteem in which youth, size and vigor were held. To be a successful wrestler, therefore, enhanced a man's position. The Trumaí were also impressed by Quain's height and wanted to know what kind of medicines white men used to make them so tall. There was no warrior class and no special status for success in combat, except insofar as it was an indication of strength and courage.

As noted above, the status of old men was very low, except when they had special knowledge or office. Yet these attributes did not protect Matiwana from being contemptuously referred to as an old man. Moreover, Quain was severely criticized for giving presents to old Yahu, most of whose property had already been claimed by others, since the Trumaí did not think it proper that one so old should have any possessions beyond fishing and hunting equipment and other necessities. A favorite insult among the Trumaí was to tell someone he was old, and by implication that he no longer bathed or was able to fornicate.

Prestige variations, on the whole, were not great in the Trumaí village. The community had no clearly defined social groupings based on status, nor were there social mechanisms for human exploitation. Variations in wealth were slight, and their only significance was that one man might have more tools and trinkets than another. It is possible, however, that before the Trumaí had declined to their present low estate, prestige and authority were more clearly patterned, as they still were in the Kamayurá village.